



What Others are Saying

Everglades Headwaters Refuge and Conservation Area Proposal



Mike Adams, Rancher

"As a fourth generation ranching family, we have learned to work with wildlife in our cattle operation. The wildlife is as important as

our cattlemen managing the cows... We recognize the importance of biodiversity in our ranching operation. Maintaining natural systems and a healthy habitat is critical for our wildlife. We view conservation easements as a way to maintain a working landscape agriculturally and maintain natural systems at the same time.

If these easements are crafted well, we have an opportunity to maintain a huge open landscape in the middle of Florida that will be of great value to future generations. We have hopes that this national refuge can accomplish this."



credit George Willson



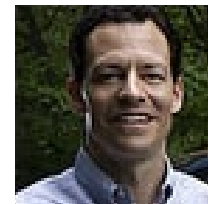
Lieutenant Colonel Charles "Buck" MacLaughlin, U.S. Air Force Commander, Detachment 1, 23rd Wing, Avon Park Air - Ground Training Complex

"In my opinion, this is a rare opportunity

to preserve part of the rural culture of Florida, protect an invaluable ecosystem, ensure continued access to natural areas, and, in doing so, implement a land use that is very compatible with the military training mission at Avon Park Air Force Range. This initiative has "home-run" potential for all involved."

in fee-simple by the Service, something we find is imperative. We certainly see valuable conservation merits in targeting critical lands that support a rich diversity of natural resources. Conservation easements from willing private land owners are a smart tool to give ranching families an option that may help preserve their ranching heritage. The ranchers' long history as excellent land stewards have helped promote and sustain natural resource diversity in the basin. Continuing the ranching lifestyle in this landscape will continue conserving fish and wildlife resources and improve Everglades water resources as well."

to our state's future, as is preserving our agricultural heritage. The Nature Conservancy has been working to conserve the Northern Everglades for decades and we are proud to be a partner in this effort."



National Wildlife Refuge Association President Evan Hirsche

"The Northern Everglades Conservation Area is crucial to protecting

Florida's ranching way of life, providing safe and plentiful drinking water to millions of Floridians and conserving our nation's remarkable wildlife heritage," said Evan Hirsche, National Wildlife Refuge Association's President. "The National Wildlife Refuge Association is proud to have collaborated in the development of this draft plan and we look forward to working with our partners to conserve this vital ecosystem for the people who depend on it and the wildlife that call the Everglades home."



Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commissioner Ron Bergeron

"The FWC is a willing partner that can provide public hunting access on public lands acquired



Florida State Director The Nature Conservancy Shelly Lakly, Ph.D

"I'm so thankful on behalf of The Nature Conservancy to see for the first time in twenty years a

new national wildlife refuge in Florida. Protecting water and wildlife is so critical